

# Medea's story

**Elizabeth Stow**

I don't regret it. Believe me, I would do it again if the occasion called for it. I just feel that people should hear the story from my side for a change. All they know about me is what a man, Euripides, tells them, but how can a man relate my story with the same understanding as a woman?

We start in Colchis, the land of my birth. I'll concede that I was a bit of a stropky teenager. My Dad and I had completely different values, he was always too busy with state affairs to spend any time with me. As for my brother, we just didn't get on. Yes, everyone thinks that their little brother is irritating, but this guy had to be the worst, or maybe I was just jealous of him – more than normal sibling rivalry. He was always my Dad's favourite, the 'only son and heir'. You've heard it all before, a father living his life through his son and ignoring his daughter. Anyway, whatever the excuse, adolescence was not a good time for me.

That was until I found a new interest: magic. I had a natural aptitude for it, with an insatiable thirst for knowledge. I wanted to know all that could be taught. I learnt of curing medicines and helpful spells, and when all that had been exhausted I turned to black magic. It scared me, but at the same time exhilarated me as I began to realise the extent of my powers. Magic was my only interest. Until a certain foreigner came to steal part of our National Heritage. I fell in love. Well, it's every girl's clichéd dream, the handsome stranger in desperate need of help. I didn't have a chance against him. He wanted the Golden Fleece, so I (the besotted maiden) helped him obtain it.

Some feel that I betrayed my country by giving away our most prized possession. But, let's face it, it was pretty useless in our land. No one could get anywhere near it because of this dragon that relentlessly guarded it, and even without him it was still stuck in the middle of a Great Forest, hardly easy access. I never saw a happy family going to visit it on a Sunday afternoon. We didn't need it, Jason did – his step-uncle had refused him his rightful throne unless he was brought the fleece. When Jason told me this, his huge brown eyes gazing pleadingly at me, I was unable to refuse his request for help. I could do nothing except gaze at him nodding dumbly.

This was all before I really knew him, before I realised what an unfaithful, lying little rat he really was. For love of him I betrayed my family and homeland. In return, what did I get? The 'Great Greek' bestowed on me the opportunity to live in Hellas, 'the land of the Gods'. I know that it was little reward for what I did for him, but at the time I was totally smitten (not really in a state to demand half his kingdom as well as his hand in marriage). I was,

actually, beside myself with gratitude when he said that he would marry me. I thanked him, trusted him. It was as if all my prayers had been answered. I would leave the country that, out of resentment for my father, I hated, to go and live with the man that I loved so very desperately. My only excuse is that I was very young, wise in magic but so naive in the ways of men. It makes me cringe to think of how pathetic I must have looked when wounded by Eros' arrow.

So there I was, all ready to leave with Jason and his pathetically loyal Argonauts, when we heard that my father was chasing us. Did Jason turn to fight him like a man'? Did he devise some cunning little plan with the odd wooden horse or two? No, not a bit of it, our 'brave hero' came to me once more with his whining voice, expecting me to 'make everything all right'. So I grabbed my innocent brother, and dragged him harshly onto the boat, ordering the men to set sail. Meanwhile, Jason cut a sorry figure standing in the centre of his Argo as his men scurried around him, obeying the orders of a woman.

Hastily we put out to sea. The lookout saw my father, his boat smaller and lighter, He was gaining on us fast. I grabbed my brother killing him, swiftly, with a sharp dagger. He didn't even struggle. His face had the same betrayed, haunted look of my sons as I raised my hand to terminate their lives more than a decade later. Odd. I don't remember if they wailed aloud or violently struggled, it's only their expression, their huge dilated, uncomprehending eyes that can never be eradicated from my memory. . .'

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